

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING NEWS



# Spotlight on Community Living

Wednesday, March 11, 2015

Serving D.C. residents who are age 18+ with a disability or age 60+ and their caregivers

Vol 3, No 5



## Executive Director's Message

*John M. Thompson, Ph.D., CPM, FAAMA, D.C. Office on Aging*

Last month I testified at the Agency Performance Oversight Hearing before the Committee on Housing and Community Development chaired by Councilmember At-Large Anita Bonds. Highlights of our accomplishments over the past year include our efforts protecting the financial interests of seniors, increasing access to home and community-based services, improving operations, combatting social isolation, and connecting with more customers.

DCOA collaborated with AARP's Legal Counsel for the Elderly (LCE) to advocate for legislation to prevent seniors from losing their homes through foreclosure due to relatively small sums of unpaid real property taxes. Based on LCE's analysis of the tax sale lists provided by the Office of Tax and Revenue, the number of tax sales of properties coded as "senior" fell from 26 in 2013 to just 9 in 2014, a reduction of 65%.

DCOA is collaborating with the District's Elder Abuse Prevention Committee and the U.S.

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to implement "Money Smart for Older Adults" to educate seniors on how to recognize and prevent financial exploitation. Money Smart for Older Adults is an interactive module that has been well received at DCOA's senior wellness centers and we encourage you to sign up today.

In October 2014, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) awarded DCOA a competitive \$1 million, three-year federal grant to further develop a dementia-capable system of long-term services and supports (LTSS) for persons living with Alzheimer's disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) and their caregivers. With this funding, DCOA plans to expand access to services for customers living alone with ADRD, offer money management services for persons with mild cases of ADRD, expand a respite care program in underserved Wards 7 and 8, and create a behavioral symptom management training program to enhance professionals' understanding of ADRD.

According to Dr. Roger A. Mitchell, Jr. in 2013, 70% of accidental deaths among District residents ages 65 years and older were due to falls, which makes it the leading cause of death among older adults for the fourth year in a row. DCOA launched the Falls Prevention Program in July 2014 which included seminars and television commercials that aired between July 2014 and September 2014. In conjunction with the education campaign, occupational therapists perform in-home falls risk screenings and share recommendations on how to eliminate fall hazards.

Through a partnership with The National Foundation to End Senior Hunger (NFESH), DCOA launched What a Waste™, a new initiative to combat senior hunger by reducing and recapturing food waste in the District. At three senior wellness centers they are identifying waste that can be reduced, and waste that cannot be eliminated to convert into compost. The compost will fertilize onsite herb and vegetable gardens. In

December, DCOA composted 438 pounds of food, which is equivalent to reducing carbon dioxide emissions created from driving a car 435 miles.

Bread roll waste was reduced by 57% in two months after the food vendor changed the type of roll and how often it was served. Milk replaced yogurt during some meals because many seniors were lactose intolerant or they found it unappetizing. Seniors receive the proper amounts of calcium and Vitamin D. Finally, DCOA worked with sites to improve the meal order process to eliminate waste.

On December 1, 2014, the Connector Card Program replaced the Call-N-Ride program to increase options for seniors accessing public transportation without restrictions. Seniors pay a sliding fee based on their income and DCOA subsidizes expenses up to \$100 per card per month on a Connector Visa Card. The card can be used on public transportation that accepts this method of payment in the Greater Washington Metropolitan area.

In partnership with D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) and Jumpstart, DCOA is connecting seniors with early childhood

students or reading, one-on-one tutorials, and facilitate special activities. Seniors have an opportunity to give back while combatting social isolation. The children gain wisdom and acquire life skills from the seniors, while sharing their joy, energy, and enthusiasm about learning. The teachers receive additional assistance in the classroom that enhances the students' overall learning experience.

DCOA has released a free long-term care planning guide to help residents understand long-term care, the importance of long-term care planning, and the resources available to District residents. More than 31,000 copies have been distributed across the city to senior centers, hospitals, doctors' offices, District libraries and recreation centers, and churches.

The agency budget hearing is scheduled for Thursday, April 23, 2015 at 11:00 AM at the historic John A. Wilson Building in Room 120. I look forward to seeing you at that hearing! To learn more about DCOA's programs or obtain the long-term care planning guide, visit [www.dcoa.dc.gov](http://www.dcoa.dc.gov) or call 202-724-5622.



## COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

### MARCH EVENTS

#### 11th • 10:30 a.m.–2 p.m.

Hayes Senior Wellness Center, 500 K St. NE, will present a Community Health, Wellness and Informational Fair. Contact Andre Lane or Sherrell Briscoe at 202-727-0357.

#### 12th • 10 a.m.–noon

Join the Ward 4 Mini Commission on Aging at its monthly meeting held at the Fourth District Police Precinct, 6001 Georgia Ave. NW.

#### 12th • 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

The D.C. Office on Aging and the Office of Unified Communications will conduct a Smart911 Presentation and Reg-

istration event at the Deanwood Recreation Center KEEN Senior Program, 1350 49th St. NE. For more information or to schedule a presentation, call 202-724-5622.

#### 12th • 11:30 a.m.

Gettysburg (Fort Lincoln 1) will hold a town hall meeting at 2855 Bladensburg Rd. NE. For more information, contact Thelma Hines at 202-529-8701 extension 222

#### 16th • Noon–3 p.m.

The D.C. Office on Aging will provide information on its resources and services at Washington Hospital Center, Physician's Office Building, 106 Irving St. NW

#### 17th, 31st • Noon

The D.C. Caregivers Online Chat at Noon is held bi-weekly to provide caregivers with assistance through an online forum. Log on for advice, resources and tips to assist you with your caregiving responsibilities. If you are not available at 12 p.m., check back at your convenience and hit replay to see the entire chat. Join the discussion at [www.dcoa.dc.gov/page/caregiver-chat](http://www.dcoa.dc.gov/page/caregiver-chat). For more information, contact Linda Irizarry at 202-535-1442 or [linda.irizarry@dc.gov](mailto:linda.irizarry@dc.gov).

#### 18th • 10 a.m.

The D.C. Office on Aging (DCOA) Ambassador Program is a free, interactive, member-based program designed to reach out to older adults and their caregivers to help them learn about the services and resources available to them through DCOA. If you are interested in expanding your network and educating older adults about the services

and resources available to them, join the next Ambassador Training Workshop to learn about all of the programs and services that DCOA offers to the community and how you can become an Ambassador. All workshops include an overview of Office on Aging programs and services, information on how to access resources, and guidance on your role as an advocate. Call 202-724-5622 to register today.

#### 21st • 1–3 p.m.

Come to a program called Golden Era at Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 5101 14th St. NW. To learn more, call 202-726-2220.

#### 23rd • 7 p.m.

Iona Senior Services presents a play reading in partnership with the Playwright's Forum. In Kitchen Sink by Paula Stone, after a lifetime of cooking, a woman sells the contents of her kitchen in a yard sale. Admission is \$5. Iona

is located at 4125 Albemarle St. NW. To reserve a seat, call Patricia Dubroof at 202-895-9407.

#### 25th • 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Congress Heights Senior Wellness Center, 3500 Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave. SE, will present a Community Health, Wellness and Informational Fair. For more information, call 202-563-7225.

#### 26th • 10–11 a.m.

The D.C. Office on Aging will provide information on its resources and services at Zion Baptist Church 4850 Blagden Avenue, NW.

#### 31st • 10 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Chevy Chase Community Center will hold a Community Health, Wellness and Informational Fair. The center is located at 5601 Connecticut Ave, NW. Contact Chevy Chase Community Center staff at 202-282-2204.

